

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NEW DE 02982 012047Z

62

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 AID-20 OMB-01 CU-04 EB-11 AGR-20 SY-10

DRC-01 /158 W

----- 086179

R 011425Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0025

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 2982

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, IN

SUBJ: GUJARAT: FORMER CHIEF MINISTER PATEL RESIGNS FROM
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND IS EXPELLED FROM CONGRESS PARTY.

REF: NEW DELHI 2632

SUMMARY: FORMER CHIEF MINISTER PATEL RESIGNED HIS ASSEMBLY
SEAT MARCH 1, THEREBY CONFOUNDING THE CONGRESS LEADERSHIP'S
PLAN TO FORCE HIM OUT AS HEAD OF THE LEGISLATIVE PARTY WHILE
STILL AVOIDING THE NECESSITY OF DISSOLVING THE ASSEMBLY. HE
OPENLY ADVOCATED DISSOLUTION, SAYING IT WAS BACKED BY ALL
SECTIONS OF SOCIETY, AND WAS EXPELLED FROM THE PARTY THE SAME
DAY. OTHER CONGRESS (R) RESIGNATIONS MAY FOLLOW AND FORCE THE
CENTER'S HAND, BUT MRS. BANDHI HAS TOLD PARLIAMENT SHE IS
OPPOSED TO DISSOLUTION UNTIL NORMALCY RETURNS TO GUJARAT.
VIOLENCE CONTINUED ALL LAST WEEK IN GUJARAT, AND BOTH
BUSINESS ACTIVITY AND GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION HAVE BEEN
IMPAIRED SERIOUSLY. MRS. GANDHI SEEMS TO HAVE UNDERESTIMATED
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NEW DE 02982 012047Z

THE DEPTH OF FEELING ON THE DISSOLUTION QUESTION IN GUJARAT,

AND THE NORMALCY SHE WANTS TO SEE THERE IS NOT NEAR AT HAND.
END SUMMARY.

1. ON MARCH 1 FORMER CHIEF MINISTER CHIMANBHAI PATEL RESIGNED FROM THE GUJARAT STATE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. HE THEN GAVE HIS PERSONAL ASSESSMENT THAT DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY WAS NECESSARY TO "SAVE GUJARAT" BECAUSE IT WAS DESIRED BY ALL SECTIONS OF THE SOCIETY, AND WAS PROMPTLY EXPELLED FROM THE CONGRESS PARTY. HIS MOVE FOLLOWED A FEBRUARY 28 "DIRECTIVE" FROM THE CONGRESS PARTY LEADERSHIP IN NEW DELHI TO RESIGN AS HEAD OF THE LEGISLATIVE PARTY. THE LEADERSHIP, HOWEVER, HAD NOT WANTED PATEL TO RESIGN HIS ASSEMBLY SEAT, AS IT SOUGHT TO AVOID FURTHER RESIGNATIONS OF EIGHT CONGRESS(R) AND 20 OTHER MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. IN ADDITION TO STRIDENT DEMANDS FROM STUDENT RIOTERS FOR DISSOLUTION OF THE GUJARAT ASSEMBLY, OPPOSITION MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ON FEBRUARY 21 DEMANDED SUCH ACTION. UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR HOME AFFAIRS MIRDHA IGNORED THESE DEMANDS AND CRITICIZED THE OPPOSITION FOR EXPLOITING THE UNREST IN FUJARAT. MRS. GANDHI HAS GONE MUCH FURTHER IN PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES THIS WEEK, SPEAKING OF THE "FASCIST STYLE" OF OPPOSITION GROUPS EXPLOITING LEGITIMATE GRIEVANCES OF THE PEOPLE TO "WREST POWER". SHE TOLD THE RAJYA SABHA (UPPER HOUSE) FEBRUARY 28 THAT DISSOLUTION OF THE GUJARAT ASSEMBLY "CAN BE DISCUSSED ONLY WHEN NORMALCY HAS BEEN RESTORED". AT THAT TIME, SHE SAID, "WE CAN MEET, OR ANYBODY CAN MEET ALL SECTIONS, LISTEN TO THEIR VIEWS AND GIVENSERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO THEIR VIEWS AND THEIR DEMANDS". THE FOLLOWING DAY SHE SAID IN THE LOK SABHA THAT THE GUJARAT SITUATION SHOWED THERE WERE EFFORTS AFOOT TO "SUBVERT THE ENTIRE SYSTEM". SHE AGAIN RULED OUT DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY UNTIL PEACE AND NORMALCY RETURNED TO GUJARAT.

2. PATEL'S RESIGNATION AND EXPLUSION FROM THE PARTY CAPS A WEEK OF CONTINUED DISTURBANCES IN GUJARAT. VIOLENCE HAS CONTINUED IN AHMEDABAD, THE CAPITAL CITY OF GANDHINAGAR, BARODA, SURAT AND OTHER CITIES AND TOWNS. THE ARMY HAD TO BE ALERTED IN BARODA ON FEBRUARY 25 BECAUSE OF ATTACKS ON PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS. SINCE FEBRUARY 22 THERE HAVE BEEN NINE DEATHS IN RIOTING. THE FOCUS OF RIOTING HAS SHIFTED FROM FOOD TO POLITICAL DEMANDS, AS SOME FOOD HAS BEEN ARRIVING IN THE STATE AND GRAIN PRICES

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NEW DE 02982 012047Z

HAVE FALLEN SOMEWHAT. RECENTLY MOBS HAVE BEGUN TO ATTACK GOVERNMENT INSTALLATIONS. ON FEBRUARY 28 IN GANDHINAGAR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES PREVENTED THE ADVISOR TO THE GOVERNOR (WHO IS ADMINISTERING PRESIDENT'S RULE), H C SARIN, FROM ENTERING THE SECRETARIAT AND DEMONSTRATED BEFORE THE HOME SECRETARY AND NEW CHIEF SECRETARY. MOBS IN THE SAME CITY BURNED TWO GOVERNMENT AUTOMOBILES AND DEMAGED THE GOVERNMENT CIRCUIT HOUSE.

3. CONSULATE GENERAL BOMBAY TERMS GUJARAT "ADRIFT AND LEADER-LESS" AND NOTES THAT THERE HAS BEEN A GENERAL DISINTEGRATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL MACHINERY. THE AHMEDABAD MUNICIPAL COMMISSIONER HAS RECOMMENDED THAT THE CITY'S MUNICIPAL CORPORATION BE SUSPERSEDED AS 89 OF 91 CORPORATORS HAVE RESIGNED. A SIMILAR SITUATION EXISTS IN BARODA, AND RAJKOT HAS ONLY ONE CORPORATOR LEFT. BANKING AND BUSINESS LIFE IN AHMEDABAD HAVE BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY DISTURBED IN RECENT WEEKS.

4. COMMENT: THE BATTLE OVER DISSOLUTION OF THE GUJARAT ASSEMBLY HAS NOW REACHED MAJOR PROPORTIONS, AS PATEL HAS PUBLICLY JOINED THE CONGRESS PARTY. MRS. GANDHI HAS CHOSEN TO INTERPRET DEMANDS FOR DISSOLUTION AS TANAMOUNT TO SEBVERSION OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS, APPARENTLY IGNORING THE DEPTH OF PUBLIC FEELING ON THIS MATTER IN GUJARAT. WITH THE BATTLE LINES DRAWN, THE NEXT FEW WEEKS MAY SEE AN INCREASE IN VIOLENCE WITH THE ARMY AGAIN CALLED OUT--IN ANY CASE, THE "PEACE AND NORMALCY" WHICH MRS. GANDHI WANTS TO SEE IN GUJARAT ARE NOT NEAR AT HAND.
MOYNIHAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, CIVIL DISORDERS, POLITICAL SITUATION, PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT, PARTY LEADERS, POLITICAL PARTIES, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974NEWDE02982
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740375/aaaacrjp.tel
Line Count: 136
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: NEW DELHI 2632
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Aug-2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <09 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GUJARAT: FORMER CHIEF MINISTER PATEL RESIGNS FROM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY AND IS EXPELLED FROM CONGRESS PARTY.
TAGS: PINS, PINT, IN, (PATEL, CHIMANBHAI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005